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# Preparation of the Forest Atlas

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U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service





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Issued April 6, 1907.

# United States Department of Agriculture,

## FOREST SERVICE,

GIFFORD PINCHOT, Forester.

### PREPARATION OF THE FOREST ATLAS.

As rapidly as possible the Forest Service will prepare a set of standard maps of the National Forests. A preliminary statement of the plan by which data for these maps are to be obtained and used is given in the Use Book. In this circular is explained the general form and purpose of the Forest Atlas and the use of township plats in collecting data for it.

The central part of the map system will be a Forest Atlas, which will be kept at the Forest Service. The Atlas will aim to show all data of use in connection with the administration of the Forests. Copies of the Atlas sheets for a particular Forest as soon as completed will be placed in the hands of the supervisor.

Data to be recorded in the Forest Atlas will be obtained by the field force of the Service, and will usually be mapped on township plats, following the scheme of the Forest Atlas legend page, which will be furnished to all members of the field force of the Service. The data will be transferred from the township plats to the Atlas sheets, or the township plats, where mapped with sufficient accuracy and care, will be mounted upon the Atlas sheets direct.

### THE FOREST ATLAS.

The Atlas will consist of 20 or more volumes, each volume containing 150 to 200 sheets. The standard sheet is 18 inches by 21 inches, of which a strip  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches by 21 inches on the left hand (west) edge is left blank to allow for binding. This gives a surface of 21 inches north and south and  $16\frac{1}{2}$  inches east and west available for any section of map which can be included within those limits, or for any single map of smaller size.

Double-page maps are made on sheets 21 inches high (north and south) and as wide (east and west) as may be necessary up to 33

inches. Larger maps are used in sections, each section including a portion that will readily come within the limits of the standard sheet (or double sheet when necessary), and always leaving on the standard sheet the blank strip on the left for binding.

The title is placed in the lower right-hand portion of the standard or double-page sheet whenever possible. In maps made in sections the title is placed only upon the first sheet, and the sheets are numbered from west to east, beginning at the northwest corner, thus—

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9, etc.			

Borders are omitted when the map extends to the extreme edge of the sheet.

Township numbers are placed on the right-hand (east) side a half inch from the edge of the sheet.

Range numbers are placed on the lower (south) side a half inch from the edge of the sheet.

The top of the map is always north. For instance, if a map is only 10 inches north and south, but 19 inches east and west, a double-page sheet is used. The map is never twisted around to better fit the sheet.

The usual scale for the Atlas will be 1 inch to 1 mile, on which scale a standard sheet may show as much as a group of six townships. The scale may vary above or below this standard. If a smaller scale is used, as, for instance, to cover larger areas or for general maps, it is made either one-half inch to 1 mile, or one-fourth inch to 1 mile. A larger scale than the standard will frequently be used. In many cases a single township on the scale of 2 inches to 1 mile will be shown. Where necessary to show a small area in still greater detail, a scale of 4 inches to 1 mile or even 8 inches to 1 mile may be employed. Whatever the scale used, it will always sustain a simple relation to the standard, as 2:1, 4:1, or 8:1, as the case may be. It can then readily be reduced to the standard.

#### TOWNSHIP PLATS.

Forest officers will be supplied with plats of the townships included within their respective reserves. These plats are upon the uniform scale of 2 inches to 1 mile. Each plat represents a township or fractional township, and, in a few cases, a township plus a fractional township. The plats have been compiled from various sources, and bring together, though not always perfectly, the data at hand for the area represented. So far as the topographic sheets of the Geological Survey cover an area, they have been used. Where township or section lines have been run they are shown by full



lines; where not run, by dotted lines. Tracts which have been alienated—that is, are in private ownership—are indicated by line shading.<sup>a</sup>

The township plats when received by supervisors should be forwarded to rangers as needed for use in three general ways: First, to correct topography or land lines where errors exist; second, to record data for the Forest Atlas; third, to report upon any matter which can be shown graphically, even though the record is only of temporary value.

The plats will be found in error in some cases. Where errors exist they should always be corrected and the corrections forwarded to the Service.

In recording data for the Forest Atlas, the signs and symbols given on the Forest Atlas legend page should be closely followed. If additional conditions are to be shown, any convenient symbol may be used, with an explanation on the margin. Legend pages will hereafter be sent to supervisors in sufficient numbers to supply all rangers. The data should be placed upon the plats with as much accuracy and neatness as possible. Well-drawn township maps will not be redrawn at the Service but will be mounted direct upon the sheets of the Atlas. It should be the aim of every field officer to make his maps good enough to be handled in this manner.

On no Forest will all the data suggested in the legend page be of equal importance. Forest officers in charge will decide what class of data is to be taken up first. On well-timbered Forests data relating to timber classification and sales would be most important; on Forests where grazing is most important, range classification. Distinct lines should represent the boundaries of the classifications, but since the stands of timber on each unit of area will be averaged, classification of minor differences in density of stand within an area is unnecessary. The tree species in each timber classification should be noted whenever possible. To avoid confusion, either the appropriate symbol or the common name of the species shown in the legend should be used, not the local name. On practically all Forests the improvements, privileges, and alienations should be recorded. Beginning with the most important townships and data, the forest officers should send in the completed township plats as rapidly as their duties will permit.

The township plats may also be used in Forest work to show the location of burned areas, insect-killed timber, timber sales, trespasses, and special privileges involving rights of way or tracts of land of considerable size. In fact, the plats may be used for reporting upon

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<sup>a</sup> It must be understood that in the matter of alienations these plats can not be accepted as final authority, but can be regarded as presumptive evidence only.

any matter which can be shown by map, although they may not always be desirable for small explanatory sketches sent in with correspondence.

The Grazing Map legend is not for use on the .1 inch to 1 mile Atlas sheets. Data relating to grazing will be drawn on a smaller scale map, which will form one page of the Atlas. It will be colored with crayons, so that alterations may easily be made when changes occur in the areas open to any kind of stock or when areas are closed against grazing.

Any data forwarded to the Service on township plats, or otherwise, if of permanent value, will be entered upon the Forest Atlas. Whenever sufficient data are received for a group of townships a standard map will be prepared, to be included in the Atlas, and a copy will be sent as soon as possible to the supervisor to replace less complete maps. In this fashion, by the cooperation of all concerned, the mapping of the National Forests can go on systematically, until a complete system of detail maps has been completed. When a Forest is completely mapped the map will be lithographed so as to be generally available.

Approved:

JAMES WILSON,

*Secretary.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 5, 1907.*





